Maxwell

MAIN ST.

WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON.

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# Unknown Portrait from the Vail Dear Collection

## A Cabinet Card from Maxwell Studio, Walla Walla

## Notes

Jeffrey Hunt
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This portrait is preserved in the Vail Dear Steel Box Collection. The sitter is an unidentified young woman, photographed at Maxwell's Studio on Main Street in Walla Walla, c 1895–1905.

She wears a gown with the leg-of-mutton sleeves that became popular in the mid-1890s, paired with a delicate pendant at her throat. Her hair is drawn back neatly, accented with a ribbon. These fashion details, along with the Maxwell mount and imprint style, point to the closing years of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth. Further comparison with other Maxwell card mounts in the collection may help pin the date more precisely.

Though her name is not recorded, there is reason to believe she may have been part of the Vail–Young–Baker family circle, which recurs throughout this archive. A known portrait of Clara Elizabeth Young Baker, held in the Douglas County Museum, shows similarities in bearing and facial structure, though confirmation remains open.

This card also shares its imprint and mount style with several other Maxwell photographs in the Vail Dear Steel Box Collection. It is likely that members of the same family group had their portraits taken during a single studio visit, producing a cluster of related images. Studying these photographs together will be essential for narrowing dates and, eventually, for identifying individual sitters.

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Photo Comparison

Shown here are two related images placed side by side: at left, the unidentified young woman from the Vail Dear Steel Box Collection, photographed at Maxwell's Studio in Walla Walla, c. 1895–1905; at right, the portrait of Clara Elizabeth Young Baker preserved in the Douglas County Museum.